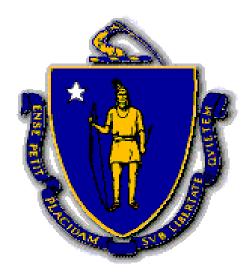
Massachusetts

Summaries of Statewide Data Sources Relevant to Domestic Violence



Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence

April 2001

Jane Swift Governor

Jean Haertl
Executive Director
Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence

A Report of the Research and Evaluation Subcommittee

Commissioner Howard K. Koh, M.D., M.P.H., Co-Chair Department of Public Health

Diana Brensilber, Co-Chair Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division



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> Jane Perlov Secretary

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It is our hope that the information contained in this report will assist domestic violence service delivery and advocacy groups in obtaining valuable information relative to intimate partner violence in Massachusetts.

This report can also be downloaded in PDF from the Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division Web Page at: http://www.state.ma.us/ccj

If you refer to this report in a publication or in any other manner, we would appreciate being informed about such a reference. Whenever possible, a copy of such a document or reference should be sent to the Statistical Analysis Center at the address below.

If you have any questions or feedback regarding this report or the survey, please contact:

Diana Brensilber, SAC Director
Massachusetts Statistical Analysis Center
Executive Office of Public Safety
Programs Division
1 Ashburton Place, Room 2110
Boston, MA 02108
Telephone: (617) 727-6300
E-Mail: Diana.Brensilber@state.ma.us

E-Mail: Diana.Brensilber@state.ma.us Internet address: http://www.state.ma.us/ccj

Purpose of this Report

This report provides a summary of data sources in Massachusetts that provide significant information on the nature and scope of domestic violence. Some of these data sources are primarily concerned with domestic violence, such as the Registry of Civil Restraining Orders, while others have a broader scope but include some domestic violence statistics.

This summary is intended to assist program planners, policy analysts, researchers, the media, and others who need to locate data sources that might be able to address their questions about domestic violence. The data sources listed in this report provide a wealth of information on a variety of topics relating to domestic violence. For instance, the contributing sources of domestic violence data have informed us that:

- Between October 1, 1999 and September 30, 2000, 25 women and children (22 women and 3 children) were murdered as a result of domestic violence or intimate partner violence. This is a 67% increase from the previous year. *Source: Jane Doe Inc., Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (2000).*
- According to Massachusetts data reported to the National Incident-Based Reporting System in 1998, one in five aggravated assaults (22%) were committed by an intimate partner. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the victims were female. Source: Massachusetts State Police Crime Reporting Unit (1999) 1998 Data from the National Incident-Based Reporting System [Online].
- 21% of female high school students in 12th grade reported being hurt physically or sexually by a date. *Source: Pratt, Carter (2000). [Analysis of Massachusetts Department of Education's 1999 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey]. Unpublished raw data.*
- From 1994 to 1998 there were 1,341 female victims of violence-related weapon injuries reported by Emergency Departments. 21% of these injuries, where relationship was reported, were inflicted by an intimate partner. Source: Cummins, Patrice (2000). [Analysis of 1994-1998 data from the MA Dept of Public Health's Massachusetts Weapon-Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS)]. Unpublished raw data.
- 19% of women surveyed in 1999 reported ever being sexually assaulted. 22% of these women reported ever being sexually assaulted by an intimate partner. Source: Mucci, Lorelei (2000). [Analysis of data from the MA Dept of Public Health's 1999 Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey]. Unpublished raw data.
- In Fiscal Year 2000, 33,511 women and children received Department of Social Services (DSS) -funded community-based domestic violence services, including legal advocacy, and support groups. Source: Jane Doe Inc., Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. FY2000 Summary of Massachusetts Domestic Violence Statistics.
- According to the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance, court-based SAFEPLAN advocates in 6 counties assisted 5,752 victims over 13,700 times, during calendar year 1999. Source: Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance (2000) SAFEPLAN Massachusetts: A Report to the Legislature. Boston, MA: Author.
- For the fifth consecutive year, the number of calls to the Judicial Response System (JRS) declined, with 6.3% fewer calls in FY00 than FY99. The JRS is the statewide emergency program for resolving emergency legal situations when court is closed. Source: Administrative Office of the Trial Court (2000). Judicial Response System. Fiscal Year 2000 Report. Boston, MA: Massachusetts Administrative Office of the Trial Court, Planning & Development Department.
- The number of restraining orders filed in 2000 declined 4% from 1999 (from 36,085 to 34,742), and 29% from 1993 (49,248). Source: Massachusetts Office of the Commissioner of Probation (2000). Massachusetts Probation Service, Registry of Civil Restraining Orders Summary. Boston, MA: Massachusetts Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Field Services Division, Research Department.
- 20% of women (aged 18 and older) surveyed in 1998 and 1999, who identified as having experienced intimate partner violence in the past year, obtained a restraining order. Of these women, 24% stated the restraining order was violated. Source: Mucci, Lorelei (2000). [Analysis of intimate partner violence data contained in the MA Dept of Public Health's 1998 & 1999 Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey]. Unpublished raw data.

- Certified Batterers Intervention Programs in Massachusetts serve over 2,000 men per year. Source: Rothman, Emily (2000). [Analysis of preliminary 2000 data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Batterer Intervention Program]. Unpublished raw data.
- According to the Registry of Civil Restraining Orders, an estimated 43,000 children a year are exposed to reported acts of abuse and violence between family members. Source: Adams, Sandra (1995). The Tragedies of Domestic Violence: A qualitative analysis of civil restraining orders in Massachusetts. Boston, MA: Office of the Commissioner of Probation.

Accurate, consistent and complete information on the nature and scope of domestic violence is crucial to targeting resources, refining policies, and evaluating programs. It is our hope that this report, in outlining not only what data sources exist in Massachusetts but also their strengths and limitations, will serve as a guide for improving both the range and accuracy of information available on this important public health and safety problem. Some ideas for accomplishing that goal can be found in the Recommendations section of this report.

Recommendations

- 1. A clearinghouse for domestic violence statistics should be created. There is an urgent need for better coordination and integration regarding the collection and analysis of information on the incidence, nature and scope of domestic violence. Numerous state agencies and programs currently collect incidence data across the Commonwealth. There is no single office that compiles these statistical data across systems in order to develop a thorough and refined picture regarding this problem and trends over time. Without such information, it is extremely difficult to assess whether resources are currently being targeted in areas of greatest need. It is also very hard to evaluate local or statewide initiatives intended to prevent domestic violence. The Subcommittee recommends that the clearinghouse be charged with:
 - Routinely compiling statistical information from other state agencies and programs, regarding the nature and scope of domestic violence. This would include periodic tabulations of data and special reports.
 - Where necessary, analyzing raw data from other agencies in order to extract statistical information on domestic violence that the agency itself does not have the resources to analyze.
 - Working with individual agencies and programs to improve the consistency and quality of the incidence data being collected.
 - Compiling an annual report that presents detailed information on the extent of the problem of domestic violence in the Commonwealth.
 - Compiling a report at least every 5 years that provides a detailed analysis of the trends over time in both domestic violence statistics and their apparent quality.
 - Compiling periodic reports on how domestic violence impacts important sub-populations, including youth, the elderly, immigrants or refugees, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.
- 2. All agencies and programs that currently collect statistical information related to domestic violence should be encouraged to review the consistency and quality of their data. Though many data sources exist across the state, much data is self reported, and checking the accuracy of the information can be difficult. Agencies and programs should review their current forms and hold meetings with those who submit data to determine potential sources of confusion and inconsistency in data entry. They should also run analyses on their data systems intended to look for problems such as large amounts of missing information, internally inconsistent responses on forms, and large amounts of variability over location or time that have no logical explanation.
- 3. **Data systems that collect statistical information on domestic violence should include victim-offender relationship**. This is particularly true for data systems that collect information on a variety of crimes, not all of which are related to domestic violence. The absence of victim-offender relationship makes it impossible to identify domestic violence cases.
- 4. Data systems that collect information regarding the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence should include information that increases the ability to perform local-area analyses, such as city/town or census tract. Local information helps programs and funding agencies to target areas with the greatest need. Such information also provides local programs with improved ability to evaluate their efforts.

- 5. Data systems that collect statistical information on domestic violence should include data fields that improve the ability to analyze data specific to immigrant and refugee populations. The most important data fields to include are:
 - Primary language
 - Country of origin
 - City/town of residence
 - English proficiency
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Need for interpreter
 - Use of interpreter

Where possible, these data should be self-reported. Persons should also be allowed to identify with multiple races and ethnicities.

- 6. Data systems should strive to include and disseminate statistical information on domestic violence involving youth, given the importance of this sub-population in the development of primary prevention efforts. Increased attention is being focused in both the Commonwealth and across the country on the topic of "teen dating violence," with the hope that teaching young people the warning signs of abuse and ways to find help will reduce the number who go on to become abusive or abused adults. Information is needed in order to determine what kinds of programs are effective in this sub-population.
- 7. Data systems that collect information on the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence should include a field on sexual orientation so that more information will be available on people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender. Programs to assist these subgroups need more information with which to refine strategies for outreach, education, prevention, intervention and evaluation

General Issues Regarding Data Sources on Domestic Violence

All of the datasets described in this report have their limitations. The limitations listed under an individual data source tend to be those that are specific to the data source (i.e., faults that were common across nearly all datasets, such as unknown reliability, were not reiterated under each separate data source listing).

Some general issues to bear in mind when assessing a data source include:

- Representativeness. The individuals covered by a given dataset are seldom representative of the entire population at large. Think carefully about who the datasets do and don't include and how representative you believe the samples are for your purposes (e.g., only cases coming to court; only individuals coming for medical treatment; only people who call the police; only people willing to answer a survey).
- Quality. Data quality may be highly variable -- the consistency and accuracy of most datasets on domestic violence remains unknown. Data quality may also be inconsistent across time, which makes analyses of trends across time problematic.
- <u>Comparability</u>. When a dataset is generated for tracking victims, by compiling information across numerous reporting subunits (e.g., hospitals, police departments, courts), there is significant potential for inconsistent data collection procedures across these subunits. This affects the overall accuracy of the compiled data, and is likely to invalidate many of the comparisons across subunits.
- <u>Utility</u>. Datasets that do not include the victim-offender relationship (e.g., boyfriend, ex-husband, etc.) are not able to provide information or estimates specific to domestic violence, unless the <u>entire</u> dataset <u>only</u> includes individuals involved in intimate partner violence
- <u>Completeness</u>. Most large datasets suffer from substantial amounts of missing data. Just because a data source is listed as including a particular variable does not mean that information is available on this variable for all, or even most, cases in the dataset.
- <u>Interpretation of Findings</u>. The interpretation of the numbers generated by any given database, or changes in these figures over time, is not always straightforward. For instance, if the number of restraining orders issued increases from one year to another, it is unclear whether this reflects a rise in the underlying rate of domestic violence, an increase in the proportion of abused women obtaining restraining orders, or both.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Courts/Probation

Registry of Civil Restraining Orders Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Massachusetts Trial Court

Overview

The Massachusetts Registry of Civil Restraining Orders, implemented in 1992, was the first statewide, centrally computerized restraining order database in the country. Maintained by the Office of the Commissioner of Probation of the Massachusetts Trial Court, its primary purpose is to provide police and the courts with accurate and reliable information for the tracking and enforcement of restraining orders. Over 94% of these are Abuse Prevention Orders (209A). Probation personnel enter the data into the computerized registry on the same day that the order is issued in any one of the 69 District Courts, Boston Municipal Court, 14 Superior Courts and 14 Probate and Family Courts in the state. The Registry database contains information on the specific conditions of each restraining order, and the age and gender of the offender. Linkage between this database and all other automated databases within the Massachusetts criminal justice system provides information on the extent of the offender's criminal record and court dispositions. There is some overlap between permanent orders entered into the Registry and emergency orders issued by the Judicial Response System (JRS) after regular hours. Approximately 330,298 restraining orders were entered into the Registry between 1993 and 2000.

Strengths

- Computerized
- 100% catchment of temporary and permanent 209A's
- Large numbers allow meaningful assessment at local level
- Provides age and gender of the abuser
- May be broken down geographically by court district
- May be linked with defendant's criminal record

Limitations

• The victim/offender relationship is not recorded

Published Reports

- Registry of Civil Restraining Orders Summary 1993-2000
- Serial Batterers (1999). Probation Research Bulletin.
- From Chaos to Clarity in Understanding Domestic Violence (1998). Domestic Violence Report.
- The Tragedies of Domestic Violence (1995).
- Project History of the Massachusetts Statewide Automated Restraining Order Registry (1994).
- Young Adolescent Batterers: A Profile of Restraining Order Defendants in Massachusetts (1994).
- Men Who Batter (1994). Archives of Family Medicine.
- Domestic Violence: The Invisible Problem (1994). National Association of Probation Executives.

Availability

- Data are accessible only to court and law enforcement officials
- All reports are available from the Office of the Commissioner of Probation at no cost.

Contact:

Carmen Cicchetti, Research Director, Office of the Commissioner of Probation One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (617) 727-5300, ext. 254 - Cicchetti_C@jud.state.ma.us

Judicial Response System (JRS) Administrative Office of the Trial Court

Overview

The Judicial Response System tracks orders issued after hours by on-call judges serving the eight regions of the trial court. Over 91% of calls received in FY2000 were related to domestic violence. On-call judges register information concerning the date and time of the call, the requester, and the judicial action taken. These logs are sent to the Planning and Development Department of the Administrative Office of the Trial Court which publishes the findings in quarterly and annual reports. In FY2000, on-call judges received 9,119 requests for Abuse Prevention Orders under c. 209A. Because plaintiffs may go on to request permanent 209A's during regular court hours, some overlap exists with the Registry of Civil Restraining Orders.

Strengths

- Captures restraining orders issued after regular court hours
- Calls from police departments may be broken down geographically by city/town

Limitations

- Details on individual restraining orders are not entered into this database
- Victim/offender relationship is not recorded
- Final data set is paper-based

Published Reports

- Judicial Response System Quarterly Reports from July 1985 to present
- Judicial Response System Annual Reports from 1986 to 2000

Availability

• Quarterly and Annual Reports are available at no cost through the Administrative Office of the Trial Court

Contact Person: Mary Jane Moreau

Administrative Office of the Trial Court

2 Center Plaza Boston, MA 02108 (617) 742-8383

moreau m@jud.state.ma.us



National Incident-Based Reporting System Massachusetts State Police

Overview

The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is a reporting system through which data are collected for each single crime occurrence. It is intended to replace the summary-based Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR). Massachusetts was one of the first states certified to submit NIBRS data to the FBI. Implemented in 1993, the State Police Crime Reporting Unit currently collects and maintains NIBRS data submitted by 196 police agencies, representing a residential population of approximately 3 million. It is unclear when all police agencies will be reporting data in this format. NIBRS covers 46 offense categories, including most violent offenses. Data are gathered by local police departments and sent via computer files to the State Police where they are entered into an electronic database. NIBRS includes an extensive list of codes for identifying the relationship between the victim and the offender in all reported incidents, including those involving domestic violence. As of April 2001, there were 870,000 incidents on file. However, not all are domestic violence in nature.

Strengths

- Has the ability to identify several different types of intimate partner relationships
- Provides demographic information on both victims and offenders
- Has the ability to track multiple victim and multiple offenders per incident
- Allows for tracking of multiple offenses per victim in each incident
- Large amounts of information allow for breakdown geographically by city or town
- "Offender Based Tracking Number" (OBTN) is collected on all arrestees, so that it will be possible to determine the judicial response to criminal acts.

Limitations

Not yet statewide

Published Reports

- Campbell, Anne, Steven Muncer and Daniel Bibel. "Female-Female Criminal Assault: An Evolutionary Perspective" J. of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 35:4, November, 1998.
- Thompson, Martie P., Linda E. Saltzman, and Daniel B. Bibel. "Applying NIBRS Data to the Study of Intimate Partner Violence: Massachusetts as a Case Study." J. of Quantitative Criminology, 15:2, 1999.
- Various tables on the Massachusetts State Police web page (http://www.state.ma.us/msp/)

Availability

- Main database is in a format that may be difficult to analyze
- Data set is available for research purposes with case identifiers stripped off.

Contact Person: Dan Bibel

Massachusetts State Police

470 Worcester Rd.

Framingham, MA 01702

(508) 820-2111 - Daniel.Bibel@pol.state.ma.us

Supplemental Homicide Reports Massachusetts State Police

Overview

Supplemental Homicide Reports (SHR) provide information from police agencies regarding homicides. When appropriate, approximately 140 police agencies can provide SHR data, to the Massachusetts State Police for entry into an electronic database. Data for Massachusetts homicides are available from the Crime Reporting Unit from 1986 on. The data set includes: incident date; case number (for tracking purposes); general location; weapon type; circumstance; the victim and the offender's age, race and sex; and the nature of the victim/offender relationship.

Strengths

- Accessible to the public
- Data are routinely collected

Limitations

- No data are submitted by State Police Detective Units and some local police departments
- Difficult to identify non-partners killed in incidents related to intimate partner violence

Published Reports

• Annual Reports are available in printed form and on-line at the Massachusetts State Police web page (http://www.state.ma.us/msp/)

Availability

• Computerized data set is available for research purposes.

Contact Person: Dan Bibel

Massachusetts State Police

470 Worcester Rd.

Framingham, MA 01702

(508) 820-2111

Daniel.Bibel@pol.state.ma.us

Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division/ Criminal History Systems Board

Overview

The Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report will be used to provide detailed information on domestic violence incidents across the Commonwealth. This reporting system is intended to identify locations and populations in need of services, disseminate information to policymakers, and improve prosecution of cases. Data will be collected by police and entered into each department's Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) terminal for inclusion into a centralized database at the Criminal History Systems Board. Piloting of this reporting system began in February of 1998 in several police departments across the Commonwealth. It is estimated that the data collection system will be available to all Massachusetts police departments in 2001.

Strengths

- Contains detailed information on domestic violence incidents including suspect and victim information.
- Will provide statistics on the level of reported violence by city and town

Limitations

• Is still in the implementation phase.

Published Reports

• No reports published at this time.

Availability

• Data is only available to police agencies participating in the pilot program.

Contact Person: Diana Brensilber

Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division

1 Ashburton Place, Room 2110

Boston, MA 02108

(617)727-6300 ext. 25325

Diana.Brensilber@eps.state.ma.us



W.A.T.C.H. Project's Emergency Department Surveillance System Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

The W.A.T.C.H. (Women Abuse Tracking in Clinics and Hospitals) Project of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health is one of three projects funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to pilot a statewide surveillance system for intimate partner violence against women. The Emergency Department Surveillance System component of the Project gathers data on hospital emergency department visits by females age 12 and over. Emergency department (ED) providers' documentation is abstracted from the medical record, entered into each hospital's computer system, and downloaded monthly to the W.A.T.C.H Project. Information is gathered on the following variables: chief medical complaint; current and lifetime experience of partner violence; cause and intentional nature of injury (E-code); diagnosis (ICD-9 code); victim/perpetrator relationship; safety assessment and planning; and referrals. Data collection is being implemented in 8 hospital emergency departments. Federal funding for the W.A.T.C.H. Project began October 1, 1994 and will end June 30, 2001.

Strengths

- Includes all females age 12 and over who are seen in the emergency department
- Includes female patients coming in with any chief complaint (not only those presenting with inuries)
- Chart audits are conducted to monitor data quality
- Multiple visits by a patient to the same hospital may be tracked

Limitations

- Lack of universal screening for intimate partner violence at participating hospitals.
- Emergency department and medical records staff need to modify their routine procedures to participate in the surveillance system, making implementation difficult

Published Reports

• The Project began publishing newsletters in 1999.

Availability

• The data set is protected by Chapter 111, § 24A of the Massachusetts General Laws and is not available to the public.

Contact Person: Carter Pratt

Massachusetts Department of Public Health 250 Washington Street, 4th Floor Boston, MA 02108-4619 (617) 624-5401

Carter.Pratt @state.ma.us

Weapon-Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS) Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

Since 1990, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has tracked gunshot and stabbing injuries presenting to hospital emergency departments through the Weapon-Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS). The system has been operating statewide since 1994, with approximately 80 hospitals reporting annually. In addition, six health care centers participate, as well as one Veterans Administration hospital. In addition to demographic information regarding the victim, data are collected concerning the circumstance and location of the incident; weapon type; location of injury on the body; intent of injury; victim-offender relationship; mode of arrival; and disposition of the case.

Strengths

- All Massachusetts hospital emergency departments participate
- Compliance checks have revealed that approximately 75% of weapon-related injuries are reported to WRISS

Limitations

- Pre-hospital deaths, caused by weapons, are not captured
- WRISS captures only gun-related and violence-related sharp instrument wounds. Assaults by other means are not captured (e.g., fists, shoving, etc.).

Published Reports

- Annual newsletters (Weapon Injury Update)
- City summary sheets
- Special bulletins (Gunshot Wounds Decline for Massachusetts Residents, Weapon-Injuries in Massachusetts Schools)
- Journal articles (When Bullets Don't Kill, Massachusetts Weapon-Related Injury Surveillance System)

Availability

• The data set is protected by Chapter 111, § 24A of the Massachusetts General Laws and is not available to the public. Customized summaries and data reports may be provided as needed.

Contact Person: Beth Hume

Massachusetts Department of Public Health 250 Washington Street, 6th Floor Boston, MA 02108-4619

(617) 624-5664

beth.hume@state.ma.us

Emergency Department Surveillance and Coordinated Injury Prevention Project (ED SCIP) Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

In 1998, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health implemented an electronic injury surveillance system in selected hospital emergency departments. The purpose of the Emergency Department Surveillance and Coordinated Injury Prevention Project (ED SCIP) is to provide information on injuries that do not generally result in hospitalization or death, as there are surveillance systems monitoring these. Medical records, filled out by providers in emergency departments, are coded by hospital information services and sent to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for entry into the ED SCIP database. In addition to demographic information, data are collected concerning the mode, location, severity and intent of the injury (E-codes, ICD-9-CM codes), victim-offender relationship, financial charges and the place where the injury occurred. In 1999, data collection was expanded to a random sample of 30 Massachusetts hospital emergency departments.

Strengths

• Specific information can be gathered concerning mode of injury (e.g., how many women were intentionally injured by guns, burns, and strangulation)

Limitations

- Still in implementation phase
- Hospitals may not routinely screen for intimate partner violence
- Strength and quality of the data are dependent on provider documentation and medical records coding. Most cases of domestic violence do not receive an E-code and thus are not identifiable in this data set
- The data set does not include women who come to the ER with non-trauma presentation (such as abdominal pain) which may be related to intimate partner violence

Published Reports

• No reports published at this time. A comprehensive data summary is planned for 2001.

Availability

• Aggregate data and customized reports are available to the public. Reports and aggregate data can be requested via a community request form (available from the Project Director).

Contact Person: Torie Ozonoff

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

250 Washington St. 6th Floor

Boston, MA 02108 (617) 624-5663

Torie.Ozonoff @state.ma.us

Provider Sexual Crime Report Massachusetts State Police

Overview

Massachusetts General Law (C.112, §12A½) requires every physician, hospital, sanatorium, or other institution to complete the Provider Sexual Crime Report for every victim attended to, treated, or examined for the crimes of rape or sexual assault. Currently, hospitals and medical centers complete the report and mail or fax it to the VICAP (Violent Criminal Apprehension Program) Section of the State Police, where personnel record the information into a database. The Report was initially implemented in 1989, and a redesign of the Report was distributed to hospital emergency departments in March 2000. The redesigned Report is a near replica of the S.A.N.E. report (see page 18) but excludes variables relative to health history and actions taken by the patient since the time of the assault. The data set contains information on mode of assault, threats, location of the incident, weapons used, demographic information on the assailant and victim, victim-offender relationship. In addition to providing an account of the problem of sexual assault in the Commonwealth, this dataset can be compared to law enforcement summary statistics, allowing for an estimation of underreporting to law enforcement for sexual assault cases.

Strengths

- Contains extensive information on the incident
- Reporting is mandated by Massachusetts General Law

Limitations

- Only includes sexual assault victims who seek help in an emergency department
- Underreporting issues

Published Reports

• No reports published at this time

Availability

• Data is not accessible to the public.

Contact Person: Sergeant Steven McCarthy

Massachusetts State Police 470 Worcester Road

Framingham, MA 01702

(508) 820-2310

Steven.McCarthy@pol.state.ma.us

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.) Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.), when fully implemented, will provide a statewide network of trained and certified registered nurses, available 24 hours a day, to respond to sexual assault victims in hospital emergency departments. Administered by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, S.A.N.E. was first implemented in 1997 and, by 2001 included 13 hospital emergency departments and one urgent care facility. Additional hospitals will be designated as S.A.N.E. sites pending funding appropriations. The victim provides information regarding the sexual assault to the Nurse Examiner at the time of the emergency department visit. A copy of the record is then sent to the S.A.N.E. Program at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for data entry. The data set contains information on mode of assault, threats, location of the incident, weapons used, demographic information on the assailant and victim, victim-offender relationship, and results of the nurse's physical examination.

Strengths

- Contains extensive information on the incident
- Provides the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner's findings from the physical examination

Limitations

• Only includes sexual assault victims who seek help in an emergency department within five days of their assault

Published Reports

• No reports published at this time.

Contact Person: Carter Pratt

Massachusetts Department of Public Health 250 Washington Street, 4th Floor

Boston, MA 02108-4619

(617) 624-5401

Carter.Pratt @state.ma.us



SAFEPLAN Database Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance

Overview

SAFEPLAN (Safety Assistance For Every Person Leaving Abuse Now) is a state-funded, domestic violence civil court advocacy project, administered by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA). SAFEPLAN advocates are present at 29 District and Probate and Family courts to assist victims of domestic violence. Data collection is not yet statewide, but, when fully implemented, should include 87 trial court sites. Intake information is collected at the time of client contact by the court advocate and then transferred to an electronic database by MOVA personnel. Information is collected on the client's age; sex; primary language; race/ethnicity; sources of income; relationship to abuser; use of previous services for battered women; and services provided by MOVA. Services provided during follow-up contacts are also documented. Funding does not exist for SAFEPLAN to be expanded in all District and Probate courts.

Strengths

- Includes information on primary language, income sources, and prior use of battered women's services
- Provides demographic information on plaintiffs seeking restraining orders

Limitations

• Not yet funded for statewide implementation

Published Reports

• Reports have been released to the Massachusetts Legislature for FY96 through FY2000 and are available to the public

Availability

• The dataset is available at no cost through MOVA. Any member of the general public or private agencies may call the Family Violence Project Manager to request the dataset. Requests must indicate the purpose for which the dataset will be used.

Contact Person: Brooke Ely, Family Violence Project Manager

Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance

1 Ashburton Place, Room 1101

Boston, MA 02108 (617) 727-5200

Brooke.Ely@state.ma.us

Sexual Assault Surveillance System Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

The Sexual Assault Surveillance System was implemented by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in 1985. Information is collected from the 20 state-funded rape crisis centers (RCCs), which are located across the state so that every resident may have access to services. The statewide Spanish language sexual assault hotline, Llamanos, began providing data in 1999. Data are collected on every sexual assault reported to RCCs. Sexual assault survivors, their friends, family members, or professionals may make reports. Data are collected regarding demographic information of the survivor, including primary language and presence of a disability; details concerning the incident and any assistance sought by the survivor; some demographic information on the assailant(s); and victim-assailant relationship(s). Funding for this project is dependent on federal block grant dollars.

Strengths

- Provides information on intimate partner sexual assaults that may not be reported to the police or to hospital emergency departments
- Data can be used to compare intimate partner sexual assaults to sexual assaults by other assailants in terms of whether the police or hospitals were notified, how quickly the survivor sought care, and demographic information concerning the survivor and offender(s)
- Data can be broken down geographically by city/town

Limitations

• Information on some variables may be missing as helping survivors takes precedence over data collection

Published Reports

- "Shattering the Myths: Sexual Assault in Massachusetts 1985-1987", published by MDPH in February 1990
- "Sexual Assault in Massachusetts 1988-1997: Findings from Publicly-Funded Rape Crisis Centers", November 1999.
- Presentations: "Sexual Assault Data Collection at MDPH: Challenges and Practical Strategies"; "A Delicate Balance: Meeting the Needs of Sexual Assault Clients and Quality Data Reporting"; "Rape Crisis Centers: Focus on Adolescents, 1990-1994"; "Rape Crisis Center Data: 1988-1995".

Availability

- Free copies of statewide and limited local data are available upon request by sending or faxing the specific request to the address below along with your contact information (phone, fax, e-mail, mailing address). Please allow sufficient time for processing data requests.
- Copies of some reports can be viewed at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health web site at: http://www.state.ma.us/dph/sapss/data.htm.

Carter Pratt, Massachusetts Department of Public Health 250 Washington Street, 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02108-4619 (617) 624-5401, Carter.Pratt@state.ma.us

Batterer's Intervention Programs Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health began implementing a data collection system for clients seen by certified Batterer's Intervention Programs in 1999. This system collects data from the 22 (MDPH) Certified Batterer Intervention Programs in the state. Program staff collects information on all batterers at intake. The data is compiled in an electronic database at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The content of the data set includes detailed demographic information on batterers; drug and alcohol use; referral source; prior criminal record; type of violence; restraining order history; use of weapons; and custody of children.

Strengths

- Provides detailed information on batterers
- Includes the disposition of each criminal case and restraining order information
- Provides information on number and characteristics of court-referred batterers

Limitations

- Still in implementation phase
- Batterers may under-report the severity of the violence they have perpetrated

Published Reports

• No reports published at this time.

Availability

• No information available to the public.

Contact Person: Carter Pratt

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

250 Washington Street, 4th Floor

Boston, MA 02108-4619

(617) 624-5401

Carter.Pratt @state.ma.us

Massachusetts Domestic Violence Data Collection Massachusetts Department of Social Services/Jane Doe, Inc., Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Overview

The Massachusetts Domestic Violence Data Collection system was implemented in 1997 to gather information on women and children receiving services from 39 domestic violence service providers in the state. Advocates collect data from clients who use shelters, safe homes and transitional living centers, non-residential services, and who make hotline calls. Forms are entered into an electronic database utilized by the Department of Social Services (DSS) to evaluate bed usage and identify gaps in service provision. Jane Doe, Inc., Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence provides summary information to the public and to public policy staff for legislative purposes. The data set includes demographic and health-related information, the victim's relationship to the abuser, parenting and child issues, details of hotline calls and services requested, provided, or referred.

Strengths

- Provides a broad range of specific information on intimate partner violence from those women who access battered women's services
- Provides information on children using services
- Is useful for identifying gaps in services

Limitations

Only battered women's programs receiving DSS funds are included

Published Reports

• No reports published at this time.

Availability

• A summary report is available at no cost. Contact Jennifer Meade at (508) 721-9713.

Contact Person: Toni Wiley

Jane Doe, Inc.

14 Beacon Street, Suite 507

Boston, MA 02108 (617) 248-0922, ext. 205



Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Department of Education

Overview

The Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is administered every two years by the Massachusetts Department of Education to students from randomly selected high schools across the state. The YRBS is funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which specifies a set of core questions which are asked in all states. The purpose of the self-report survey is to monitor the prevalence of adolescent risk behaviors over time such as substance abuse, sexual behaviors, and behaviors related to intentional and unintentional injuries. In the 1997 and 1999 versions of the survey, Massachusetts added one question pertaining to adolescent dating violence.

Strengths

- It is based on a representative sample of Massachusetts public high school students
- Allows analysis relevant to immigrant and refugee populations by including language spoken at home and years in the United States
- Provides wide range of information on high risk behaviors
- Identifies respondents who have been sexually hurt, physically hurt or both in a dating relationship

Limitations

- There is only one question pertaining to adolescent dating violence. Accuracy of this question as a measure of dating violence has not been determined
- Perpetrators may also report victimization
- Sample size limits ability for detailed analysis

Published Reports

- 1999 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results
- 1997 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results
- 1995 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results

Contact Person: Carol Goodenow

Department of Education

350 Main St.

Malden, MA 02148

(781) 338-3603

CGoodenow@doe.mass.edu

Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Overview

The Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual, statewide telephone survey of randomly selected Massachusetts adults 18 years of age and older. Through cooperative agreements with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state Departments of Public Health, similar surveys are conducted in all states. In addition to demographics, the BRFSS collects information about a wide variety of health issues, ranging from health-related behavior and access to medical care, to opinions on health-related policy issues. Interviewers from a private survey research firm, contracted by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, collect the data. Violence modules, focusing on intimate partner violence, were added to the Massachusetts BRFSS between 1996-1999 as part of the W.A.T.C.H. Project. These data are used to estimate statewide population-based rates of intimate partner violence (IPV); the portion of IPV survivors included in certain service provider data sets; and some of the effects of intimate partner violence on survivor's lives. The total number of BRFSS interviews conducted in Massachusetts has increased from approximately 3,000 in 1996 to 7,000 in 1999. Fiscal support for inclusion of the IPV questions in the BRFSS was provided by the W.A.T.C.H. Project between 1996 and 1999. The Massachusetts Department of Public health has added a new intimate partner violence module for 2001.

Strengths

- Survey consists of a representative sample of adults ages 18 and over living in Massachusetts
- The BRFSS collects a wide range of information on other health status indicators
- In 1996-98, MA BRFSS was administered in English, Spanish and Portuguese; Haitian Creole and Cantonese were added in 1999

Limitations

- There are a limited number of questions pertaining to intimate partner violence. Accuracy of these questions as a measure of intimate partner violence has not been determined
- The violence module used by Massachusetts is not one of the CDC's core modules, and therefore its future inclusion in the MA BRFSS is not guaranteed
- Survivors may not disclose intimate partner violence to interviewers
- Sample size limits ability for detailed analysis of subgroups
- The household reponse rate is somewhat low (65% in 1999)

Published Reports

- Hathaway JE, Mucci LA, Silverman JG, Brooks DR, Mathews R, Pavlos CA. "Health status and health care use of Massachusetts women reporting partner violence" Am J Prev Med, 19:4, November 2000.
- Hathaway J, Silverman J, Aynalem G, Mucci L, Brooks D. "Use of medical care, police assistance, and restraining orders by women reporting intimate partner violence -Massachusetts, 1996-1997" MMWR, 49:22, June 2000.

Availability

Individuals interested in obtaining a copy of the data set should send a letter stating the
reason for the request and whether city/town level indicators are needed. If city/town level
indicators are requested, individuals must sign a specific confidentiality agreement. Letters
should be mailed to Dan Brooks, Director of Chronic Disease Surveillance, Massachusetts
Department of Public Health, 250 Washington Street, 6th Floor, Boston MA, 02108-4619.
For available reports, contact Carter Pratt.

Contact Person: Carter Pratt, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

250 Washington Street, 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02108-4619

(617) 624-5401, Carter.Pratt @state.ma.us



Family Violence Homicide Record Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance

Overview

Since 1995, the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) has been tracking domestic violence homicides, occurring in Massachusetts, through the Family Violence Homicide Record. SAFEPLAN regional coordinators and advocates collect data on any family violence-related homicide reported in the media. The Family Violence Project Manager also works with District Attorney's Offices to ensure accurate reporting. Data are entered into an electronic database by MOVA's Family Violence Project Director. The data set includes information on the date of the homicide; the town and county in which the incident occurred; the victim's name and age; the alleged perpetrator's name and age; the victim-offender relationship; weapon; suspect suicide; protective order status; children; abuse history; and disposition of the case.

Strengths

• Includes homicides related to intimate partner violence where someone other than the partner is killed (e.g. children and other family members)

Limitations

- It may be difficult to determine from media reports whether it is appropriate to include an incident in the database
- Only includes cases where the partner has committed suicide or has been charged with the murder

Published Reports

• The Boston Globe requests a copy of this record to write an annual editorial concerning domestic violence deaths in Massachusetts

Availability

- An annual summary table is available to the public, as well as brief summaries of all homicides.
- The dataset is available at no cost through MOVA. Any member of the general public or private agencies may call the Family Violence Project Manager to request the dataset. Requests must indicate the purpose for which the dataset will be used.

Contact Person: Brooke Ely, Family Violence Project Manager

Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance

1 Ashburton Place, Room 1101

Boston, MA 02108

(617) 727-5200

Brooke.Elv@state.ma.us

Intimate Partner Homicide: A Human Rights Report Peace at Home

Overview

The Peace at Home study database contains all cases of Massachusetts residents killed in intimate partner violence-related incidents from 1991 to present. The primary objectives of the data collection, from which a study was published in 1999 for the years 1991-1995, is to count all homicides related to intimate partner violence, including partners, children, family members and other individuals, and to provide details about each homicide. The study database is victim-based, in that there is a record for each victim. The database was compiled from news articles, Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR), death certificates, lists assembled with district attorney's offices, and reports from domestic violence advocacy agencies. Information was gathered by staff, advocates and volunteers and entered into an electronic database, accessible to the public on a limited basis. Descriptive data on partner victims and other victims include, name, gender, age, race, cause of death, criminal history of the perpetrator, history of abuse, history of restraining orders, relationship to the victim, child witness, and occurrence of suicide. Much of the research for the study is performed by volunteers and interns. Consistent funds would allow the research to be performed in a more time efficient manner.

Strengths

- Provides evidence of the full extent of the problem of intimate partner homicide, including effects on those labeled "other victims"
- Enables comparison with other sources of intimate partner violence-related homicide cases such as the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Report (SHR)
- Provides a template for local agencies to supplement existing SHR data collection efforts
- As the community becomes more aware of the issue, different agencies can more readily share vital information

Limitations

- Without funding and staffing, the magnitude of research required to look at all the variables is time consuming. Adequate support for the study would eleviate this weakness
- Homicides occurring outside of the Boston area and those less likely to be reported in the media may have been missed, especially those involving gay and lesbian partners

Published Reports

- Homicides Related to Intimate Partner violence in Massachusetts, 1991-1995 (1999).
- Homicides related to Intimate Partner Violence in Massachusetts: Examining Case Ascertainment and Validity of the SHR (1998).
- The Boston Globe requests a copy of this record to write an annual editorial concerning domestic violence deaths in Massachusetts.

Availability

• Published reports and homicide lists from 1991 to present can be obtained at no cost by contacting Peace at Home via phone, fax (617) 971-0915, or e-mail. The report published in 1999 can also be viewed at the website at http://www.rawnet.org/peace/domhom.htm.

Contact Person: Stacy Kabat/Wendy Baxter, Peace at Home 209 Green Street, 3rd Floor, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 (617) 971-0131 - peaceathme@aol.com

Appendix

Agency Information and Services Provided

				Hospital Information								
Agency and Dataset Name	Agency Location	Service Date and Tim	Identifier/ e Case Code	Agency Code	Referral Made by	Referral Source	Report Completed Bv	Mandatory d Reporting Made	Case	Mode of Arrival	Service Date and Time	Discharge Status
Administrative Office of the Trial Court												
Judicial Response Survey (JRS)	✓	✓		✓			\checkmark		✓		\checkmark	
Department of Education												
Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)												
Department of Public Health												
Weapon Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS)		✓		✓				\checkmark		\checkmark	✓	\checkmark
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.)	✓							✓				
Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)												
Sexual Assault Surveillance System		✓		✓		✓					✓	
W.A.T.C.H. Project's Emergency Department Surveillance System		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
Batterer's Intervention Program		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Emergency Department Surveillance and Coordinated Injury Prevention Project (ED SCIP)		V	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓
Exec. Office of Public Safety Programs Division/Criminal History Systems Board												
Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report			✓	✓	✓		\checkmark	✓				
Massachusetts Department of Social Services/Jane Doe, Inc.												
Massachusetts Domestic Violence Data Collection	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	\checkmark				✓	
Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance												
SAFEPLAN Database	✓	✓	✓		✓		\checkmark		✓		✓	
Family Violence Homicide Record									✓			
Massachusetts State Police												
Provider Sexual Crime Report								\checkmark				
National Incident Based Reporting Sytem Database			✓	✓								
Supplemental Homicide Reports				✓								
Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Massachusetts Trial Court												
Registry of Civil Restraining Orders	✓								✓			
Peace At Home												
Intimate Partner Homicide: A Human Rights Report		✓									✓	

Incident Information

Includes victim and offender information

Administrative Office of the Trial Court Judicial Response Survey (JRS)	Agency and Dataset Name	Incident Time/ Date			Multiple Offenders	Victim/ Offender Relationshi	Victim Sexually p Assaulted	Injuries	Primary Complain	of		Evidence Collected		Weapo Type	
Department of Public Health Weapon Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS)															
Weapon Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS)	•					✓	V								
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.)		V	V	V	П	V	П	✓	V	V	▽	П	V	V	V
Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.)														
W.A.T.C.H. Projects Emergency Department Surveillance System	Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)					✓	✓								
Battere's Intervention Program	Sexual Assault Surveillance System		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
Emergency Department Surveillance and Coordinated Injury Prevention	W.A.T.C.H. Project's Emergency Department Surveillance System		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	V	
Exec. Office of Public Safety Programs Division/Criminal History Systems Board	Batterer's Intervention Program					✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	
Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		✓	✓		V		V	✓	✓	V				
Massachusetts Department of Social Services/Jane Doe, Inc.															
Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance SAFEPLAN Database	Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
SAFEPLAN Database	•					V									
Massachusetts State Police Provider Sexual Crime Report V V V V V V V V V						V					V		V		
Provider Sexual Crime Report V V V V V V V V V	Family Violence Homicide Record	✓				✓							✓	✓	
Supplemental Homicide Reports V V D D D D D D D D D D D D D D D D D		✓	✓	✓	✓	V	V				V	✓	✓	✓	✓
Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Massachusetts Trial Court Registry of Civil Restraining Orders	National Incident Based Reporting Sytem Database	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓
Registry of Civil Restraining Orders	Supplemental Homicide Reports	✓	✓		✓	✓							✓	V	
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·														
		✓	✓	✓		✓_							✓	V	

The above list does not reflect all available variables. For a complete variable listing, please contact the Statistical Analysis Center at (617)727-6300.

Victim Information and Abuse History

					Race/	Primary	Marital	209A	Prior	Prior	Child Present as
Agency and Dataset Name	Name	Address	Gender	D.O.B./Age		Language	Status	Status		Threats	Witness?
Administrative Office of the Trial Court											
Judicial Response Survey (JRS)								✓			
Department of Education											
Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)			✓	✓	✓	\checkmark			✓		
Department of Public Health											
Weapon Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.)			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Sexual Assault Surveillance System			✓	✓	✓	✓					
W.A.T.C.H. Project's Emergency Department Surveillance System		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Batterer's Intervention Program							V	✓		✓	✓
Emergency Department Surveillance and Coordinated Injury Prevention Project (ED SCIP)		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Exec. Office of Public Safety Programs Division/Criminal History Systems Board											
Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\checkmark	✓	✓			✓
Massachusetts Department of Social Services/Jane Doe, Inc.											
Massachusetts Domestic Violence Data Collection			✓		✓	\checkmark					
Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance											
SAFEPLAN Database	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		\checkmark	
Family Violence Homicide Record	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		
Massachusetts State Police											
Provider Sexual Crime Report			✓	✓	✓	\checkmark		✓			
National Incident Based Reporting Sytem Database			✓	✓	✓						
Supplemental Homicide Reports			✓	✓	✓						
Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Massachusetts Trial Court											
Registry of Civil Restraining Orders	✓	✓						✓			
Peace At Home											
Intimate Partner Homicide: A Human Rights Report				✓	✓			✓	✓		V

Offender Information

Agency and Dataset Name	Name	Address	D.O.B./ Age	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Children	Child(ren) in Common	Criminal Record	Prior Abuse History
Administrative Office of the Trial Court	1,0000	12000 000	8-	Genuel	2000000		W Common	1100014	1100001
Judicial Response Survey (JRS)								\checkmark	
Department of Education									
Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)									
Department of Public Health									
Weapon Related Injury Surveillance System (WRISS)									
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (S.A.N.E.)				✓					
Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)									
Sexual Assault Surveillance System			✓	✓	✓				
W.A.T.C.H. Project's Emergency Department Surveillance System									
Batterer's Intervention Program	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emergency Department Surveillance and Coordinated Injury Prevention Project (ED SCIP)									
Exec. Office of Public Safety Programs Division/Criminal History Systems Board									
Massachusetts Abuse Incident Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\checkmark	✓	\checkmark	✓
Massachusetts Department of Social Services/Jane Doe, Inc.									
Massachusetts Domestic Violence Data Collection									
Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance									
SAFEPLAN Database	✓	✓				\checkmark	✓	\checkmark	✓
Family Violence Homicide Record	✓	✓	✓	✓		\checkmark			
Massachusetts State Police									
Provider Sexual Crime Report				✓					
National Incident Based Reporting Sytem Database			✓	✓	✓				
Supplemental Homicide Reports			✓	✓	✓				
Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Massachusetts Trial Court									
Registry of Civil Restraining Orders	✓		✓						
Peace At Home									
Intimate Partner Homicide: A Human Rights Report			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓